

Medical Abbreviations

I. Policy

To ensure consistency in documentation regarding medical matters, the SHC staff should only use the approved abbreviations listed below.

II. Approved Abbreviations

ā	before	A-FIB	atrial fibrillation
āc	before meals	AK	actinic keratosis
A/VH	auditory and visual hallucination	AKA	above knee amputation
AAA	abdominal aortic aneurysm	ALT	alanine aminotransferase
A&Ox3	alert and oriented to person, place, and time	AMA	against medical advice
A&Ox4	alert and oriented to person, place, time, and event	AMT	amount
ABC	airway, breathing, circulation	AMS	altered mental status
ABD	abdomen/abdominal	APPROX	approximately
ABNL	abnormal	ASA	aspirin
ACE	angiotensin converting enzyme	ASAP	as soon as possible
ADD	attention deficit disorder	ASSOC	associated
ADHD	attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	AST	aspartate aminotransferase
ACLS	advance cardiac life support		
BG	blood glucose	BRAT	bananas, rice, apples, toast
BILAT	bilateral	BRBPR	bright red blood per rectum
BKA	below the knee amputation	BS	breath sounds, bowel sounds
BLS	basic life support	BSE	breast self-exam
BM	bowel movement	BSFS	blood sugar finger stick
BME	bimanual exam	BUN	blood urea nitrogen
BMI	body mass index	BUS	Bartholin's/Urethra/Skenes
BP	blood pressure	BV	bacterial vaginosis
ċ	with	CP	chest pain
C/O	complaints of (complains of)	CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
C/W	consistent with	C-SECTION or CS	caesarean section
CA	cancer	CSF	cerebrospinal fluid
CAD	coronary artery disease	CPK	creatine phosphokinase
CBC	complete blood count	C-SPINE	cervical spine

CBE	clinical breast exam	COPD	chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CC	chief complaint, Counseling Center	CT	cat scan
CEPH	cephalic, cephalad, cephalosporins	CTA	clear to auscultation
CHF	congestive heart failure	CTA&P	clear to auscultation and Percussion
CHL	chlamydia	CTS	carpal tunnel syndrome
CL	chloride; chlorine	CTA	clear to auscultation
CK	creatine kinase	CVA	cerebrovascular accident, costovertebral angle
CMT	cervical motion tenderness	CVAT	costovertebral angle tenderness
CMV	cytomegalovirus	CX	cervix
CNS	central nervous system	CXR	chest x-ray
d/c	discharge/discontinue	DT	delirium tremens
DIP	distal interphalangeal	DTaP	diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis
DKA	diabetic ketoacidosis	DTP	diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis
DM	diabetes	DVT	deep venous thrombosis
DNR	do not resuscitate	Dx	diagnosis
EAC	external auditory canal	ENT	ear, nose, throat
EC	emergency center	EOMI	extraocular movement intact
ECG	electrocardiogram	ET	endotracheal
ED	erectile dysfunction	ETD	Eustachian tube dysfunction
EEG	electroencephalogram	ETOH	ethanol/alcohol
EG	external genitalia	ER	emergency room
EKG	electrocardiogram	Ext	external
F/S/C	fever, sweats, chills	FHx	family history
FB	foreign body	FLEX	flexion
FH	family history	Fx	fracture
g	gram	gm	gram
GC	gonorrhea	GSW	gunshot wound
GERD	gastroesophageal reflux disease	gtts	drops
GI	gastrointestinal	GU	genitourinary

GLC	glucose	GYN	gynecology/gynecological
HA	headache	HGB	hemoglobin
HAV	hepatitis A	HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HBV	hepatitis B	HPV	human papilloma virus
Hct	hematocrit	HR	heart rate
HCV	hepatitis C	HSM	hepatosplenomegaly
HEENT	head, eyes, ears, nose, throat	HSV	herpes simplex virus
HEP A	hepatitis A	HTN	hypertension
HEP B	hepatitis B	HX	history
HEP C	hepatitis C		
I&D	incision and drainage	IgA	immunoglobulin A
IBD	inflammatory bowel disease	IgG	immunoglobulin G
IBS	irritable bowel syndrome	IgM	immunoglobulin M
ICP	intracranial pressure	IM	intramuscular
ICU	intensive care unit	ITP	idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura
IG	immunoglobulin		
JVD	jugular vein distension	JRA	juvenile rheumatoid arthritis
K	potassium	KG	kilogram
Kcal	kilocalorie		
L	liter	LLQ	left lower quadrant
L/S	lumbosacral	LMP	last menstrual period
L&D	labor and delivery	LN	lymph node
LA	lymphadenopathy	LOC	level/loss of consciousness
LAT	lateral	L-SPINE	lumbar spine
LB	pound	LTBI	latent TB infection
LBP	low back pain	LTP	life time partner(s)
LBS	pounds	LUQ	left upper quadrant
LLL	left lower lobe		

M/G/R	murmur, gallop, rub	MIN	minimum, minute
MCG	microgram	ML	milliliters
MCH	mean corpuscular hemoglobin	MMG	mammogram
MCHC	mean corpuscular hemoglobin concentration	MONO	mononucleosis
MCP	metacarpophalangeal	MRI	magnetic resonance imaging
MCV	mean corpuscular volume	MRSA	methicillin resistant staph aureus
MED	medicine	MS	multiple sclerosis
mEq	milliequivalent	MSSA	methicillin sensitive staph aureus
MG	milligram	MTP	metatarsophalangeal(s)
MGF	maternal grandfather	MVA	motor vehicle accident
MGM	maternal grandmother	MVC	motor vehicle crash
MI	myocardial infarction		
N/V	nausea/vomiting	NKDA	no known drug allergy
N/V/D	nausea/vomiting/diarrhea	NL	normal
NT/ND	nontender/nondistended	NPO	nothing by mouth
Na	sodium	NRB	non-rebreather
NAD	no apparent distress	NS	normal saline
NC	nasal cannula	NSAID	nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug
ND	nondistended	NSR	normal sinus rhythm
NEB	nebulizer	NT	nontender
NKA	no known allergies		
O₂	oxygen	OCD	obsessive compulsive disorder
OB/GYN	obstetrics/gynecology	OCP	oral contraceptive pills
OA	osteoarthritis	OM	otitis media
OC	oral contraceptive	OTC	over the counter
OCA	oral contraceptive agent	OZ	ounce
p̄	after	PMS	post menstrual syndrome
PAC	premature atrial contraction	PND	post nasal drip
PALP	palpation	PO	oral
PE	pulmonary embolus, physical exam	POC	Plan of Care

PERRL	pupils equal round reactive to light	PPD	purified protein derivative
PERRLA	pupils equal round reactive to light and accommodation	PR	per rectum
PGF	paternal grandfather	PRN	as needed
PGM	paternal grandmother	PSH	past surgical history
pH	hydrogen ion concentration	PT	patient, physical therapy, prothrombin time
PID	pelvic inflammatory disease	PTSD	post-traumatic stress disorder
PIP	proximal interphalangeal	PTT	partial prothrombin time
PMH	past medical history	PVC	premature ventricular contraction
PMHx	past medical history		
RA	rheumatoid arthritis	RML	right middle lobe
RAD	reactive airway disease	RRR	regular, rate, rhythm
RBC	red blood cell	RUL	right upper lobe
RICE	rest, ice, compression, elevate	RUQ	right upper quadrant
RLL	right lower lobe	RX	prescription
RLQ	right lower quadrant		
̄	without	SSRI	selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor
S/P	status post	ST	sinus tachycardia
SA	sexually active, staph aureus	STAT	immediately
SBE	subacute bacterial endocarditis (see BSE for breast self exam)	STD	sexually transmitted disease (STI is preferred terminology)
SEB DERM	seborrheic dermatitis	STI	sexually transmitted infection
SG	specific gravity	SUBCUT	subcutaneous
SH	social history	SVT	supraventricular tachycardia
SHx	social history	SX	symptom
SLE	systemic lupus erythematosus	SVD	spontaneous vaginal delivery
SOB	shortness of breath	SZ	seizure
SOLN	solution		
S-SPINE	sacral spine		
T&A	tonsils and adenoids	TM	tympanic membrane
T	temperature	TMJ	temporomandibular joint
TB	tuberculosis	T-SPINE	thoracic spine

TIA	transient ischemic attack	TX	treatment
U/S	ultrasound	UTI	urinary tract infection
UCC	urgent care center	US	ultrasound
URI	upper respiratory infection		
USG	ultrasound		
VF	ventricular fibrillation	VSS	vital signs stable
Vit	vitamin	VT	ventricular tachycardia
VS	vital sign		
WBC	white blood cells	WT	weight
WNL	within normal limits	WWE	well woman exam
X	time, times		
YO	years old	YOA	years of age
♀	female	Δ	change
↑	upper/increased	↓	lower/decreased
(L)	left	(R)	right
(B)	bilateral	1°	primary
2°	secondary	♂	male

III. Unapproved abbreviations for prescriptions and orders:

Do Not Use	Potential Problem	Use Instead
U, u (unit)	Mistaken for “0” (zero), the	Write "unit"

	number "4" (four) or "cc"	(e.g. insulin)
IU (International Unit)	Mistaken for IV (intravenous) or the number 10 (ten)	Write "International Unit" (e.g. Vitamin D)
Q.D., QD, q.d., qd (daily) Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d, qod(every other day)	Mistaken for each other Period after the Q mistaken for "I" and the "O" mistaken for "I"	Write "daily" Write "every other day"
Lack of leading zero (.X mg)	Decimal point is missed	Write 0.X mg (e.g. epinephrine, and allergy shots)
SC, SQ, Subq	Mistaken as SL for sublingual, or "5 every"	Write "subcut"
Trailing zero (X.0 mg)* *Exception: A "trailing zero" may be used to demonstrate the level of precision of a laboratory result, size of a lesion, or catheter/tube sizes.	Decimal point is missed "Trailing zero" may not be used in medication orders or other medication-related documentation.	Write X mg
H.S. (for half-strength or Latin abbreviation for bedtime)	Mistaken for either half-strength or hour of sleep (at bedtime) q.H.S. mistaken for every hour	Write out "half-strength" or "at bedtime"
cc	Mistaken for U (units) when poorly written.	Write "ml"
A.S., A.D., A.U. (Latin abbreviation for left,	Mistaken for each other (e.g., AS for OS, AD for OD,	Write: "left ear," "right ear" or "both ears;" "left eye," "right eye," or "both eyes"

<p>right, or both ears)</p> <p>O.S., O.D., O.U.</p> <p>(Latin abbreviation for left, right, or both eyes)</p>	<p>AU for OU, etc.)</p>	
<p>T.I.W.</p> <p>(for three times a week)</p>	<p>Mistaken for three times a day or twice weekly resulting in an overdose</p>	<p>Write "3 times weekly" or "three times weekly"</p>
<p>B.I.W.</p> <p>(for twice a week)</p>	<p>Mistaken for two times a day or three time a week resulting in under dosing</p>	<p>Write "2 times weekly" or "two times weekly"</p>
<p>µg</p> <p>(for microgram)</p>	<p>Mistaken for mg (milligrams) resulting in one thousand-fold dosing overdose</p>	<p>Write "mcg"</p>

IV. Reference

1. Taber's Medical Dictionary 23rd edition